V

And now, behold, I, Mormon, having been
commanded of the Lord that I should make
a record of the preservation of
this people from captivity and death,
according to the covenants which he
established with the fathers, from the time
of their departures from Jerusalem
until they ripened in iniquity—
for notwithstanding his longsuffering
and all his tender mercies, they despise
the Holy One of Israel and set
at naught their Savior, Jesus Christ, and I
have seen the end of this, their wickedness,
resisting unto blood, and it is one
continual revenge; wherefore I make
a record of my people's turn away
from him who brought them to the promised land.

I write to you, the remnants of the seed
of Jacob, and to you, who have become
the children of the covenant among
the Gentiles, disavowing every claim
of nation, kindred, tongue, and people. I
have seen your day and your rejection of
the record of the Jews, foretelling the
Messiah's coming; yea, ye persecute
the Jews and willfully misread their words,
which testify that Jesus is the Christ.

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But I, who have no gift for writing, speak
with plainness to condemn the worship of
your own success and merits, rather than
the mercies of that Being who sustains
you breath to breath and day to day, and I
have prayed that you, despite the weakness of
my words, might read them with the Spirit's aid
and inspiration, so that you might see
and know as I do. Whoso reads this book
with steadfast purpose, nothing wavering,
will learn the truthfulness of all these things
which I have written and of many things
I leave unwritten. Ye possess my words
in plainness: if ye err, it is because
ye take no thought, to ask for what they have
been given you, and seek to justify
yourselves instead of seeking to receive
justification at his hand. But when
we meet again before the judgment bar
of Jesus Christ, then ye shall know that I
have spoken nothing unto you except
the Lord commanded me. Amen.

Now I
proceed with mine account of Lehi, whose
obedience preserved a nation. In
the final days of Hezekiah came
Isaiah to a man of Lachish with
a burden from the Lord: Thus saith thy
Deliverer, O Ramath. At this time
next year, thy wife shall bear a son, and he
shall be a reservoir of faithfulness;
a fount of righteousness thy son shall be,
when all the cisterns of Jerusalem
are cracked and dry. As Sampson's jawbone saved
three thousands of his brethren and the rod
of Moses saved three millions, so shall he
be made an instrument in rescuing
a multitude more numerous than grass;
posterity beyond the hairs of old
men's beards shall call him blessed. He must flee

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before the wrath to come, for I, the Lord
of nations, will leave desolate the homes
of those who turn away from me to fill
with their own eloquence the mouths of gods
which cannot speak; nor silent idols, nor
petitions to the scepters which surround
my vineyard, can prevent its razing. In
a foreign land possessed by those to whom
your father Abraham is strange shall he
raise up an offshoot of my vineyard and
two mighty nations.

And it came to pass,
in the appointed time, that Rayael,
the wife of Ramath, was delivered of
a son and called him Lehi as the man
of God had said; and Ramath took the boy
to Egypt, that the prophet's words might be
fulfilled. Behold: now Lehi was the son
of Ramath, son of Bamael, who was
the son of Roshar, son of Joelhar,
who was the son of Jotham, youngest son
of Gideon. And now I must suppose
that ye, for whom this record is prepared,
remember to have read of Gideon,
how he went forth by night to overthrow,
with fear and trembling, all the altars of
his father, Joash, and, by stratagem,
his little band did cause their enemies
to flee before them. And his mother, who
taught Gideon to love and reason with
the Lord, was Tirzah, youngest daughter of
Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, son
of Gilead, the son of Machir, son
of that Manasseh born to Joseph, who
delivered Israel from famine in
the land of Egypt.

And it came to pass
that Lehi took to wife the daughter of
Anon, a priest of Khenmu from the east,

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FIGURE 9. “The Babe Lehi in Egypt.” Godwin.

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and Lehi called her Sara-yah, for she
had put away the false traditions of
her fathers. Now there was a famine in
the land, and Lehi took Sariah to
Jerusalem and dwelt there all his days
until the reign of Zedekiah, king
of Judah. And it came to pass that in
those days the Lord sent prophets to declare
repentance to the people, lest they be
destroyed, and Lehi was awakened to
a perfect knowledge of his sinful state
and, after he had left the temple, cried
unto the Lord:

Turn back my days to birth,
the nights to my conception, that my soul
might be refreshed! Like dew descending from
the heavens, like new wine unbottled, give
me moisture in old age and innocence
despite my years. Can babes lift up their arms
in vain? My hands shall reach the treetops and
my palms ascend above the eagles; yea,
my fingers shall surmount the stars and breach
the windows of thy mercy. Hear, O God,
the words of my mouth; hearken to my cries
and answer.

And it came to pass that as
he spake, a fiery pillar fell upon
the rock before him, and within the fire
two men and one, in form, the Son of God.
The other whispered, Lehi, hearken to
my Firstborn, and thou shalt, with all thy house,
be walled in jasper. When the Father's voice
had ended, Lehi lifted up his face
from off the ground and said, But who am I
that I should see the Man of Holiness,
mine eyes behold the Son of Man? Then came
the voice of the Redeemer, saying, I
am Jesus, the Anointed One, of whom
the prophets testified. My ears shall be
engraved, Isaiah wrote; my palms and wrists

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be pierced, as Huldah witnessed; and my flesh
be lifted up and crucified, that all
the words of Zenock and of Neum might
be brought to pass. And all mankind shall be
delivered from the everlasting bands
of death and awful chains of hell, to be
encircled round about in loving arms
eternally. And thou art Lehi, and
upon this mouthpiece I will pour out grace
and teach thee all that thou shalt say. Behold,
thy sins have been forgiven thee, and I,
the Lord, remember them no more.

And now
when he had heard these words, he cried before
the Lord and said, O Jesus, look upon
my children also, in thy mercy: on
my firstborn Laman and on Lemuel,
on Nephi and on Sam, on Eden and
on Ruth; preserve them from the wrath to come
and make thy face to shine upon them. But
when Lehi lifted up his eyes, he saw
that Jesus had removed himself from thence;
nevertheless, he did not cease to pray
but cried again and vowed a vow, that if
his children and their mother might be spared
that he would give the tenth of all with which
the Lord had blessed him. As he spake, there came
into his mind a still, small voice which caused
his heart to burn; yea it did cause his limbs
to tremble, saying, Lehi, I will make
of thee another Israel, who crossed
the river Jordan and became two bands:
so thou shalt cross the waters, and thy seed
shall prosper in the land I have prepared
for thee. According to their diligence
and heed in keeping my commandments, I
will visit them, and they shall be my sheep
and I their Shepherd.

Now, when Lehi heard
these words, his faith in Jesus Christ began

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to be unshaken, and he prayed again,
unwearyingly, for his kinsfolk in
Jerusalem: But peradventure, Lord,
the righteous number fifty; surely thou
wilt spare this city for the righteous' sake:
Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
And after many hours there came a voice
again to Lehi, saying: Who can stay
the wind, which bloweth where it listeth? None
can tell the source thereof or why it sent
the rains on just and unjust both. But man
is free to choose captivity and death
or liberty and life, and I cannot
constrain his agency lest I should cease
to be the Lord Omnipotent and all
my works of mercy be undone. They lean
upon a broken reed and pierce their palms;
they look for water in a cistern dry
and broken, troubling their own roofs, and have
inherited the wind. Nevertheless,
because of thy exceeding faith, I shall
provide a means whereby the innocent
which hearken to the warnings sent among
them, by the prophets and by visions, might
escape from bondage and the besom of
destruction. But the wicked, who reject
my counsels, shall be swept away in tears
and blood and blindness from this land, to wear
the golden chains of Babylon.

And now
a fullness of the words which Jesus spoke
cannot be written, but when Lehi heard
them, he began to tremble and to quake
and wonder what they meant and how these things
should be accomplished. And it came to pass
that after he received sufficient strength
to walk, that he departed for his house.
Now when Sariah saw that Lehi's face
did shine, she wondered and was troubled in
her mind, not knowing why he answered not

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her salutation with a word but fell
upon his bed as though he had been dead.
And for the space of two and forty hours
Sariah fasted, calling on the Lord
and begging that her husband, who lay stiff
and stark and cool, should rise again. And now
it came to pass that he, on the third day,
awakened from this state to speak of all
that he had seen as he lay sleeping:

Like
his father Joseph, Lehi dreamed a dream
in which, behold: a Man descended from
the firmament in glory brighter than
the sun, and in his wake another twelve
came hasting, luminous as stars, that all
the nations of the earth might be condemned
or justified, according to the light
and knowledge they received. The first of those
sent forth to judge the world bestowed on me
a book and bade me read the burden of
Jerusalem:

Thus saith your High Priest
and King, whom ye revile, the Author whose
commandments ye have broken and whose name
ye trample on: Look fohr destruction. Ye
shall perish twice, in fire and ice, for I
have witnessed your abominations, wrought
in lust and hate, and cannot countenance
thy wickedness, but I will hide my face
from thee in thy distress and turn away
from thine extremity.

And now it came
to pass that when Sariah heard these things,
although she had not seen, yet she believed
and said, The Lord is on my side, and I
fear not, for what can man do unto me?
Hosanna, Lord, and prosper us in our
distress. And it was counted unto her
for righteousness.

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And Lehi, having been
commanded to prepare a record of
the things which he had seen and heard, therefore
he sent his servant Olam to procure
a book wherein to write, according to
his recollection, all the words of God.
And now when Olam had returned, behold,
Sariah wrote the words which she had heard
her husband utter, nothing varying,
except to render all his speech in the
Egyptian characters which she had learned
while in the service of her father, not
knowing beforehand all the purposes
of God or how the smallness of these plates
constrains our speech. And it behooves us to
engrave our records in this mother tongue
because of its exceeding brevity.
Yea, notwithstanding the obscurity
of this, our language, and the awkwardness
of writing, I rejoice to have the means
wherewith to say the smallest part of all
I feel concerning Jesus Christ, for I
have seen his face and heard him pray, that we
might all be one, in him, as he is one
in spirit with the Father. Who can say
too much of Christ and of his righteousness?
Yea, who can glory overmuch in his
redeeming love? Behold, the Son of God
was crucified, that he might loose all men
from bondage and the pains of hell, and have
we not great reason to rejoice? If he
had carried Israel from Egypt but
abandoned us before the sea of reeds,
it would have been enough; if he had brought
us through the wilderness but suffered us
to be destroyed at Jericho, it would
have been enough; if he had dwelt among
us in Jerusalem but withheld dreams
from Father Lehi, warning of the wrath
to come, it would have been enough. But he
hath also given us this promised land,

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and he doth prosper those who put their trust
in him. Yea, blessed be the Most High God,
because of his great mercies.

And now, I,
Mormon, return to making mine account
of Lehi, who, when he told all the truth
concerning Judah's being rent aslant
by Babylon, the people sought to take
away his life. Behold, and now it came
to pass, the Lord spake unto Lehi in
a night vision, commanding him to leave
behind the land of his inheritance,
his gold and silver and his precious things,
and to depart into the wilderness
with nothing save his family: and this
to the fulfilling of his covenant,
that they might be delivered. And it came
to pass that Lehi was obedient
and called his servant Olam, that he might
go free, and Olam's wife as well, and take
from Lehi's store sufficient for their needs.
But Olam spake unto his master, and
he said: Behold, I know this city of
my father David must be punished for
its deeds, and I believe in all thy words
concerning its destruction. Wherefore, leave
me not to perish here but suffer me
to go with thee into the wilderness,
and I will be thy slave forever.

Now,
when Olam made an end of speaking, he
brought Lehi to the doorpost of his house
and with a nail requested that he be
made fast to Lehi and Sariah through
the blood of the Lamb. But behold, the Lord
had hitherto instructed Lehi that
the land of promise, whither he was bound,
must be a land of liberty, and that
no manner of captivity should be
imposed on its inhabitants, or those

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who place their brethren into bondage must
surely be struck from off its face when they
are ripened in iniquity. And for
this cause did Lehi gainsay Olam's prayer
and would not bore his ear. Nevertheless,
he spake again to Olam on this wise
and answered him: The Lord hath said that I
should take none other people with me on
this journey save it be my family;
and neither should I carry servants with
me, for the Lord delighteth not in bond
and free, in rich and poor, but would that all
men should be equal. Therefore, if ye would
that I should take you with me to this land
of promise, let us go as brothers. And
now after he had spoken, Lehi fell
upon his face and bowed unto the ground
three times; and then they kissed each other, and
they wept, together.

And it came to pass
that Lehi loaded camels with his tents
and with provisions and departed for
the wilderness. And for the space of three
days Lehi traveled with his family
until, behold, he pitched his tent beside
the sea and built an altar and gave thanks
for his safe passage from Jerusalem.
But two of Lehi's sons complained and would
that he should give them all that portion of
his goods which fell to them, dividing up
his living; saying that Jerusalem
should no more be destroyed than Babylon
itself—not knowing what the Lord had said
concerning this—and that the denizens
of that far country would have bread enough
to spare long after they had perished in
the wilderness with hunger; saying that
because of foolish dreams they languished in
a lone and dreary desert where they might
be torn apart by savage animals

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or tortured by the bands of lawless men
who terrorized inhabitants of all
the country round about Jerusalem;
and saying that their father was a vain
and foolish man who thought to make himself
a prophet for the honor of the world
and who confided overmuch in dreams
of an uncertain origin. But he
reproved them sharply and recalled to their
remembrance all the words of Habakkuk
and Jeremiah, who had spoken of
the woe to come, for in the mouths of two
or three the Lord establisheth his truth,
and sendeth other witnesses; thus, we
are left without excuse. And he refused
their importunity, but spoke to them
with gentleness and meekness and with love
unfeigned; thus Lehi, by persuasion and
longsuffering, prevailed with Laman and
with Lemuel, and they, at length, did come
unto themselves, repenting of their sins.

But Nephi hearkened to his father, and
the Lord did visit him with further light
and knowledge; for this reason Lehi and
Sariah did rejoice in Nephi and
in Sam, another Nephi; and in Ruth
and Eden, for their faithfulness; but more
especially did they delight to see
that Lemuel and Laman had put off
the galling chains of pride, acknowledging
themselves unprofitable servants and
unequal to the measure of the gift
of God's equality.

And now it came
to pass that Lehi did rehearse unto
the Lord in prayer the words of Lemuel
and Laman, touching the destruction of
Jerusalem and their petition to
return and garner their inheritance.

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And now in answer to his cries, the Lord
did visit Lehi in the night, and when
the morning came, he roused his eldest sons
and said, Awake, O Laman, and arise,
O Lemuel! and hear the merciful
bequest of your Almighty King: Behold,
I dreamed a dream in which methought I saw
a man in purple robes, and on his head
a crown: he made a proclamation, Who
among you worshippeth the Lord? Let God
be with him, and let him go up unto
Jerusalem. And from the children of
the covenant, the young men gathered to
Jerusalem. The people of the land
rose up to greet them, but one brother fought
another for dominion, and to them
with whom the Lord prevailed, the word of God
was given. And their genealogy
was found therein; yea, even their descent
from Jacob and a knowledge of their right
to be ordained as priests according to
the Order of the Son of God.

And now,
behold, my sons, is not the meaning of
these things as plain as word can be? The Lord,
our Holy King, hath granted your desire
to go unto Jerusalem and seek
out your inheritance, for he hath laid
up treasures not of gold and silver but
of precious ore whose worth shall never dim
with time: my jealous kinsman Laban hath
the sacred record of our people which
Josiah did commission to be kept
on plates of brass. And if ye will attempt,
the Lord will prosper and provide for you
the means whereby ye might obtain these plates,
for he hath given no commandments to
the sons of God save he hath first prepared
a way for them, that they accomplish all
the things which he commandeth them. And are

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ye not the children of the covenant? Then rise,
like men; go up unto Jerusalem
once more, and seek the word of God lest we
should lose a knowledge of our fathers and
the goodness of our God, in saving them
from bondage, and our ordinances be
corrupted from their ancient purity.
And come not down again until ye have
obtained the record.

Now, when Lehi made
an end of speaking, Laman marveled that
his father would command him, like a bird
back to its cage, and think that he should sing
for joy to go again unto a land
on which the judgment of Almighty God
must soon descend: its rulers overthrown
and all of its inhabitants enslaved.
And Lemuel did also murmur in
this manner. But when Sam and Nephi heard
the Lord's command, they rent their garments as
a token of their covenant to do
these things and sacrificed a little ewe
lamb, from among the firstlings tended by
their sisters, as a burnt offering.

And
the sons of Lehi traveled to the home
of their rich kinsman in the city, and
they left their father and their mother and
their sisters in a valley by the sea.
And also Olam and his wife remained.
But Olam, being seventy-and-eight
years old, began to be diminished; his
natural force abated, and he died.
And after he was buried, Olam's wife
(and now, behold, her name was Abishag)
rehearsed to Lehi the assurances
made unto Olam: more especially,
that he should be esteemed a brother, not
a servant. Therefore Abishag waxed bold
and asked if Lehi would fulfill the law

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himself or if, as proxy, he would give
a son as husband in his stead; for it
had not yet ceased to be with Abishag
after the manner of a woman, and
she still retained her moisture.

And he spake
unto Sariah, saying: Zachiel
saved Hagar in the wilderness and drew
his sword, commanding Sarah to receive
her up again a wife and sister of
an equal stature with herself; but we
have never knelt with Zachiel nor pressed
him for reprieve. What obligation can
we have to one unbound by marriage or
by blood? The law availeth none such.

And
Sariah answered him, What question can
there be of obligation when the law
availeth none, except it turn our souls
to him who veileth our iniquities
and covereth our nakedness in robes
of righteousness and strength? Have ye not called
the law a typifying of his coming? Let
us not, then, hide from its provisions, like
unfaithful servants from their master's gaze,
but ask on what conditions justice, yea,
and mercy also, might be satisfied,
and having chosen, let us seek a sign,
like Gideon, in confirmation of
our resolution.

Lehi said to her,
And what shall be our course? Can justice make
demands upon our bed or ask that we
enlarge our habitation to give place
for strangers? No; though I cut covenants
with Olam, surely I cannot be held
accountable for Olam's covenants
with Abishag. To cast his burdens on
my back would be unjust.

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She answered him,
And what of mercy? She hath done no wrong
that she should be left barren and alone,
and we cannot expect the Shepherd to
provide her husband in a thicket when
our sons return to hunt for game. But as
the Suffering Servant hath taken on
himself our griefs and sorrows, surely he
hath given us the law to teach us how
we also ought to bear the burdens of
a neighbor and to love the stranger as
ourselves.

He said unto Sariah, Which
now of your sons and husband, thinkest thou,
should be her neighbor? And whose wife shall she
be made, among the five of us? Perchance
the son ye choose rebuff his bride and it
displease the Lord; would not he slay our son
as he slew Judah's Onan? Tempt them not
with Onan's sins, lest they become a hiss
and byword in the mouths of Israel,
whose daughters speak of onanism with
contempt. And Judah, when he came unto
Tamar, went up in secrecy and shame,
after his wife had died, not knowing her
until she showed the signs and tokens of
his coming unto her. Then how much more
the shame if I should turn aside from thee
whilst thou art living? Far be it from me
to do so unto thee, and let me not
fall into error.

But she answered him,
and said, Transgression giveth no offense
or cause for shame, but sin; on Judah, not
Tamar or Shuah, be the shame. Joined hand
in hand, the wicked shall be punished, but
the seed of them that follow righteousness
shall be delivered. Was not Pharez made
the father of King David? From the same
embrace a crown and condemnation, each

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according to their understanding. I
am old and shall not bear again. But stand
ye forth in Olam's stead, and God shall give
thee eden on the lees; as Abishag
was brought to stand before the king and it
was counted unto her for righteousness,
so much the more if thou shalt do it to
the least among us. For myself, I would
that ye remain mine only, but the Lord
hath shewn me linden hills all strewn with leaves,
and though the holy seed be scattered forth,
their substance shall come home unto the stump
like sap returning to its mother roots;
not my will, but the Lord's be done.

And now
Sariah placed a nail, or tent stake, in
her husband's palm, in token of her free
consent that he stretch forth the curtains of
their habitation and enlarge the place
to which their tent gave shade; but she retained
the hammer for herself. And Lehi spake
to Abishag of their decision and
of their intent to seek a sign from God:
how they would lay a fleece upon the ground
at night and pray that it be soaked with dew
though all the earth surrounding it be dry,
and then, again, the second night, how that
the fleece should be left dry though all
around be wet with dew. And Abishag
consented to abide the trial.

And
it came to pass that on the second day,
Sariah rose and left their tent to find
the ground well-watered, but the fleece was dry.
And Lehi, taking Abishag to wife,
fulfilled her week.

And now Sariah, for
the space of fourteen days, had waited for
her sons' returning from Jerusalem;

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but on the fifteenth day, she pulled the hair
from off her head and rent her mantle, and
she clothed herself in sackcloth and sat down
among the ashes, weeping bitterly,
like Rachel for her children. And it came
to pass that Lehi counseled patience and
exhorted her to place full trust in him
who sent their sons as agents, to retrieve
the record. But Sariah mourned, and found
no comfort in his admonition, and
reproached him, saying that he was a hard,
unfeeling man who gave no thought for her
security and that her sons were dead
to rise no more because his foolish dreams
and vain imaginings persuaded them
to throw away their lives and perish in
the wilderness. And with this manner of
complaint, Sariah remonstrated with
her husband.

Wherefore, Ruth and Eden gave
her solace, saying, Mother, ye have taught,
and we believe, that God is able to
deliver us from dangers, and the Lord
may yet return to you our brothers; but
if not, we know he will make recompense
and publish peace unto thy soul. Intreat
us not to call thee Mara, for the Lord
shall bless thy latter end, and we shall be
to thee as sons and daughters both, and thou
shalt nurse the sons which we shall bear thee: kings
and priests to rule and reign in Israel
forever. So Sariah girded up
her loins with strength, and she was comforted.

And on that day her sons returned, and she
rejoiced and with her husband offered thanks
for their safekeeping to the Lord. And thus
we see in many cases that the Lord,
who proveth all his children, doth withhold
immediate relief so that we might

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FIGURE 10. "The Matriarch Sariah Laments." Godwin.

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be free to choose and not constrained by our
indebted state; and only after we
have passed the trial of our faith do we
perceive the weakness of our faculties,
which cannot comprehend the means whereby
he worketh to effect the immortality
and endless happiness of all mankind
and to deliver us from present fears.

And now it came to pass that Nephi and
his brethren came unto their father's tent
bearing the plates of brass and did relate
the circumstances which attended them
upon their errand for the Lord, and they
did also make excuse for their delay,
explaining how one Zoram, keeper of
the keys for Laban, had been taken up,
to join their company, and waited now
without the camp.

Now these had been their deeds
while they were journeying to get the plates.
Behold, when they had reached the walls about
Jerusalem, they held a council to
determine which among them would go forth
and ask the plates of Laban. And it came
to pass that they cast lots, and Laman thus
was separated from his brethren by
the Spirit of God; or, it seemed to them
that God had given the disposing of
the lot into his lap. But Laban thrust
him out and said he was a robber come
to steal the record of his brethren in
the church and threatened to cut off his hand
if he should come again, pretending that
he was a beggar.

And so Laman and
his brethren traveled to their father's house
and gathered up his gold and silver, and
they came again up to Jerusalem,
desiring Laban that he should accept

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their father's treasure on exchange for that
which would preserve their seed from bondage and
from death: a knowledge of the Lord and of
his tender mercies in delivering
their fathers from the Wilderness of Sin—
this notwithstanding their iniquities.
But Laban, not content to trade his brass
for gold, did send his servants forth to slay
the sons of Lehi, and they fled into
the wilderness to hide.

And as they hid,
Laman and Lemuel began to beat
their younger brothers; but there is no place
unknown to God, who sent his messenger
to cry repentance. And the angel said,
Why do ye smite your younger brothers with
a rod? Go up unto Jerusalem
again, as they have counseled, and the Lord
will give the plates into your hands.

And so
they crept in darkness to the city and
did not resolve upon a stratagem
at night-time save it was for Nephi, who
went forth within the walls, and as he made
his way unto the house of Laban, he
beheld the man, there fallen to the earth
before him, drunken. Therefore Nephi took
his sword and slew him, and he dressed himself
in Laban's clothes and breached the safety of
his treasury by speaking with the voice
of Laban unto Zoram, who possessed
the keys, that he should enter in and fetch
the record. And supposing Nephi was
his master, Laban, Zoram gave the plates
into his hands and followed him without
the city walls. But when the other sons
of Lehi rose, he knew that he had been
deceived, and fled, and Nephi gave him chase
and seized him, swearing with an oath that if

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he would go down into the wilderness,
he should be free, and travel with them to
a promised land where inequalities
of rank and riches should be done away.
And Zoram swore an oath that he would go
with them to this new land.

Now Lehi had
compassion, when he heard, and sought the place
of Zoram's waiting, in a thicket, where he
verified what had been spoken and
embraced him. And it came to pass that he
rejoiced exceedingly and offered to
the Lord a sacrifice, and he gave thanks
unto the God of Israel for their
return.

But Laman murmured, saying that,
except he had been absent, Abishag
should have been given unto him to wife
and that his father was lascivious.

And Lehi said, Behold, the Lord hath made
it known to me by night that it is an
abomination for a man to seek
out many wives and concubines. The deeds
of David and of Solomon were an
affront to God, for he delighteth in
the chastity of men; wherefore, his face
is turned from those who use the bodies of
his daughters in their lusts, as objects to
be acted on. And now the land of our
inheritance must be preserved from these
iniquities, or we shall be accursed
and our descendants be forsaken of
the Lord. And so a new commandment I
give unto you, that husbands shall have one
wife only; concubines they shall have none.
Howbeit, whatsoever God commands
shall be accounted unto those who do
his will for righteousness, for what is wrong
in certain circumstances may be right

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in others, and the Lord desireth that
a righteous branch of Joseph be sent forth
among the olive trees grown wild in his
far-reaching vineyard. Wherefore, he would have
us raise up seed to him, and ye must go
again unto Jerusalem, to call
on Ishmael and ask his daughters to
accept the shade beneath your tents and share
your burdens.

And it came to pass that all
the sons of Lehi hastened to obey
these words, and Zoram also took to wife
the eldest daughter of this Ishmael;
and Lehi's daughters also gave themselves
in marriage to the sons of Ishmael.
And thus they brought forth children: Abishag
bare sons and called her firstborn Jacob, and
the second she called Joseph, saying he
should be the branch to raise an ensign for
the nations spoken of by Lehi. And
they multiplied while in the wilderness,
but not in sorrow, neither did they till
nor sow the ground, but for the space of eight
years traveled in the strength of God, unto
the seashore. And it came to pass that they
grew hale and ate raw meat made sweet, as though
it had been coriander seeds imbued
with honey; and, in the delivery
and nurturing of all their children, strength
was given to the women so that they
could bear with ease the burdens placed upon
their shoulders.

For the Lord directed them
by means of spindles in a ball of brass
which turned and pointed out their path; and it
did work, according to their faith, to guide
them into paths of safety. And that they
might cross those waters to the promised land
and raise up seed unto the Son of Man,

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Nephi was shown where he might seek out ore,
to fashion tools wherewith to build a ship,
and also he was shown the pattern for
a ship unlike the vessels made by men.

So they departed from that world unto
a new, and better, taking with them seeds
of every kind and also honey in
abundance. And it came to pass that sharp
contentions did commence between the sons
of Lehi as they crossed the waters, for
Laman and Lemuel made merry, not
observing what was written on the ball
nor calling on the Lord. But they went forth
in their own strength, aroused to action by
zeal without knowledge, lacking charity,
enticed by mead to sing and dance and speak
with rudeness to their parents; wherefore, they
were chastened by their brother, Nephi, who
addressed them with much soberness. And now
it came to pass that they were angry and
did treat him with much harshness, binding him
with cords and smiting him, and saying, We
will not allow our younger brother to
establish personal rule over us.

And after Nephi had been bound, the ball
did cease to work, and they were driven back
before a great and mighty tempest for
the space of three days, swallowed up, almost,
by mountain waves which broke upon them. And
their father, Lehi, chastened them, but they
did threaten him, that they would take his life
if he should speak again for Nephi, that
he might be loosed. Yea, neither would they hear
the pleadings of their wives and children, who
were frightened by the mighty winds which beat
upon them and did plead for the release
of Nephi, who endured his bondage with
longsuffering and praised the name of God
unwearyingly. But their pleas were vain

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and fell on stony hearts, for nothing could
persuade Laman and Lemuel to loose
their brother save it were the prospect of
a sudden death and judgment. Wherefore, on
the fourth day, fearing for their lives, they freed
him and restored responsibility
for guiding them across the seas to him
whom God had chosen, notwithstanding his
inferiority of birth, lest they
be shipwrecked and entombed beneath the waves.

And now it came to pass that Nephi prayed
unto the Lord and offered sacrifice,
and he gave thanks for his deliverance
from bondage and petitioned for their safe
arrival in the promised land. Behold,
immediately after he had prayed,
the winds and waves did cease to beat upon
their vessel, and new words appeared upon
the brazen ball, directing Nephi how
to sail their ship to safety.

And it came
to pass that after many days the land
appeared, and they saw naked people and
much water and green trees with many kinds
of fruit. And they went forth and pitched their tents
upon the land, attempting to converse
with its inhabitants according to
their language, but could not interpret what
was spoken; wherefore, Lehi caused that they
should be instructed in his language. And
the people of the land showed Lehi and
his family where ore of iron and
of gold, of silver and of copper could
be found, and Nephi taught his people—for
they truly loved him, and they would that he
should be their king—he taught the ways of God
to all who would believe, and also he
rehearsed to them the goodness of the Lord,
in warning them to flee Jerusalem,

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and piloting their feet in paths of truth
and light, and blessing all the labors of
their hands. Now Nephi shared the wisdom he
obtained of God, in artifice of wood
and iron, and of copper and of brass,
of steel and gold and silver; for this cause
a portion of the people loved him and
desired that he should be anointed as
their king. And Lehi spake unto his sons,
Laman and Lemuel, and also to
the sons of Ishmael, and Zoram, and
their seed, exhorting them to hearken to
the voice of Nephi; but they murmured and,
with vain and lying words, persuaded some
among the rising generation that
the heavens had been silenced, after their
arrival in the promised land, and that
their younger brother had no right to make
himself a king.

And now it came to pass
that Lehi went the way of all the earth.

And Nephi's older brothers sought to take
away his life and went forth stirring up
rebellion and pretending he would tax
the people grievously if they should let
him live. And as he lay asleep, the Lord
warned Nephi, in a dream, that he should flee
into the wilderness. And with the moon
to guide his steps, and all who would go with
him, Nephi took his tents and journeyed for
the space of many days, according to
the ball, or compass, which had shown their way
across the sea. And Ruth and Eden, and
his older brother Sam, and Zoram, came
away with him; the sons of Abishag,
his younger brothers, likewise followed him
into the wilderness; and others who
believed the revelations given of
the Lord to Nephi did accompany

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them in their flight. And they did call the place
of their retreat the land of Nephi, and
themselves his people. Yea, they took upon
themselves the name of Nephites, and the tribes
which stayed with Laman took upon themselves
the name of Lamanites.

And they were cursed
in this rejection of their brother, like
sinners in the hands of an angry god,
for Nephi took with him the record of
their people and the works of providence
which brought them to the promised land. Behold,
without a knowledge of their history,
they dwindled into unbelief and grew
in wickedness until they had become
a people without principle, beyond
the reach of reason or of feeling.

And
it came to pass that they waged war against
the Nephites, brother fighting brother, and
much blood was shed; but Nephi had prepared
his people to defend themselves against
the Lamanites, and they were prospered by
the Lord. Wherefore, his people multiplied
exceedingly and spread across the land,
becoming rich in gold and silver, and
in precious things. And Nephi, waxing old,
anointed a successor to defend
and labor for his people and bestowed
on him the sword of Laban. And it came
to pass that Nephi died, and hundreds of
his followers had passed away in wars
and bloodshed; wherefore they became a stern
and solemn people. But because of their
great love for Nephi, they did call their kings
in his remembrance: second Nephi, third
Nephi, and so on, stamping each with this
address, according to his reign.

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Behold,
for many years the Nephites flourished in
the north and in the south, indulgent laws
securing to the laborer the fruits
of his employment. But contention, in 1,770
the days of one Mosiah, stirred the hearts
of all the people up to anger, and
the Lord warned this Mosiah to depart
before the government was overthrown
and all the land of Nephi marched to war. 1,775

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